

# the marquee • act 5 • scene 2

JANUARY 1979

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## AKT CONFERENCE

The 5th annual conference of the Association of Kansas Theatre will be held at the Holiday Inn Plaza, Wichita, March 9 - 11, 1979. As always, this special gathering will feature a deliberate blend of National and Kansas theatre leadership, including special guest Jean Korf, President-elect of the American Theatre Association. In conjunction with the '79 conference is the state FACT Festival (Festival of American Community Theatre) and the first Kansas Festival of Theatre for Young Audiences, as well as the State Thespian Convention. In addition to a stimulating variety of learning sessions and workshops, AKT continues to offer the highly successful professional theatre auditions, and also the second year of University and College auditions and interviews for students seeking scholarships and further training in an educational theatre setting. Included in this issue of the MARQUEE are more details about the conference, and a form for advance registration.

## NEW AKT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The October MARQUEE announced the hiring of Twink Lynch as the first Executive Director of the Association of Kansas Theatre. Mrs. Lynch is a native of Washington D.C. and has lived in Topeka since 1963. She holds a B.A. in Drama, M.A. in Speech Therapy from Catholic University, an M.A. in Theatre from Kansas University, and is a Ph.D. candidate for a Special Doctorate in Community Theatre, Kansas University. She is Past President, Topeka Civic Theatre, and Kansas Community Theatre Conference. A Community Theatre volunteer for fifteen years, she is currently Vice President for Membership, American Community Theatre Association; a member, ATA Board of Nominations; ACTA Nominating Committee; Topeka Civic Theatre Volunteer Committee; and ACTA Editor, Theatre News.

Mrs. Lynch is author of a course-in-progress: "Volunteer and Staff Development," for Pennsylvania State University's series of correspondence courses for community theatre, and a member of ACTA/ATA, KCTC/AKT, Association of Voluntary Action Scholars, and National Information Center on Volunteerism. She has worked professionally as a film actress, as instructor in theatre at Washburn University and Kansas University; served as consultant to theatre and other arts organizations throughout the country; and conducted workshops at ATA, AKT, and Southwest Theatre Conference Conventions in Goal-setting, Decision-making, Volunteer Management, and Director-selection.

She has been honored as a Distinguished Woman of ATA, listed in Who's Who of American Women, named Outstanding Community Volunteer by the Junior League of

Topeka, and won the Renna Hunter Award for Best Actress and for Best Director, Topeka Civic Theatre.

Mrs. Lynch is married to Dr. John Lynch, an orthopedic surgeon, and they have four teenagers: Mark, Christopher, Nancy and Gregory.

### POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Executive Director of the Association of Kansas Theatre bears major responsibility for determining theatre needs and resources throughout the state, for maintaining a central information office, for assisting the Board with Convention planning, for assisting in the development of sources of funding, for maintaining the archives of the organization, and for the administration of the central office.\* The Executive Director plays a major role as AKT's liason with other arts groups throughout the state, with the regional and national members of the American Theatre Association, and with other regional and national arts groups.

As a beginning, the position is half-time for eight months (January through August, 1979) with a salary of five thousand dollars plus one thousand dollars for expenses. The salary is funded in part by a matching grant from the Kansas Arts Commission. At such time as the position becomes full-time, additional responsibilities such as publication of the MARQUEE, budget and membership campaign duties, establishing a library, and developing new AKT programs (theatre tours, workshops, etc.), shall be assumed by the Executive Director.

\*Beginning January 2, 1979 the phone number for the office of the Executive Director is (913) 232-7709, and will be listed as AKT Executive Director in the Topeka telephone directory.

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### SOME FACTS ABOUT FACT

Attention, all you community theatre people!

1979 is a FACT year!

#### FACT 1:

In Kansas, FACT '79 (Festival of American Community Theatre) will be held in conjunction with the 1979 Association of Kansas Theatre Conference, March 9-11 in Wichita. Headquarters for the Convention are at the Holiday Inn Plaza (across from Century II). The Festival productions will be held at Wichita State University's Wilner Auditorium--and a special thanks to Dick Wellsbacher for offering the use of these facilities.

#### FACT 2:

Our goal this year is to have eight productions in the Festival. Are you and your group planning to participate? A one-hour production (cutting or one-act play) of a show from your current season, or a production mounted specially for FACT--you can enter either way. This year, plays do not have to be written by American playwrights.

### FACT 3:

For those of you who would like to participate in the Festival, but have never done so before and are somewhat uneasy about the "competitive" aspects of it, we invite you to be FACTors in the Festival--contributing actively to the desired result of a broad-based sharing of community theatre activity in Kansas. You would receive all the benefits of participation--feedback from several invited respondents, plus the opportunity to rap with other participants about the production experience. Basically, what we're offering is a chance to grow. In order to be part of it, you only have to be eager to share and learn.

### FACT 4:

For those of you who don't have a production to bring this time, we'd like you to do yourselves and us a favor. Send two representatives to the Festival as FACT-finders, who can be resources regarding your own experience in community theatre (to share with all the rest of us), and who can report back to your community theatre group what the experience was like so you might be able to bring a production for FACT '81. You will be able to discover how the respondent/judges explore their experience with each production and what suggestions they may have for developing production options in the future. As judges, they will select a production to represent Kansas in the Regional FACT '79 in Rapid City, South Dakota, the first weekend in May.

### Putting Our FACTs Together

Our goal is "every community theatre represented," at least by one or two people who participate as observer/resource people. We are eager to learn from all of you--every group has something to teach us all! And we are eager to share our experiences with all of you, too. Please find a way to send at least one, preferably two representatives (two are more likely to come than one, especially if it's a long distance). Hold garage sales, bake sales, car-washes, snow-shovelings--whatever--and raise the money for expenses for your two representatives. Then ask them to really work for you, by taking notes, recording sessions for playback to your group, making contacts for you throughout the state. If they work for you, they will really be working for all of us as we keep trying to get better at what we love to do best--theatre--in, with, and for our communities.

Hope to see you--every group represented--in Wichita!

### PROPOSED WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON THE ARTS

A special White House Conference on the Arts is planned for the year 1980. To help prepare for it and to assure Kansas theatre a voice in the proceedings, the AKT Conference in March will feature an all convention session to articulate our concerns for the future of the Arts in America. The session will be led by a highly skilled expert in advocacy named David Gooder, who is currently Vice President for Administration in the American Theatre Association. Following are some initial concerns and suggestions to stimulate your thinking on the subject:

1. The need for greater recognition of the major role played by the arts in the quality of life in the United States.

2. The possibility of a Cabinet-level Secretary of the Arts and Humanities.
3. State and local government Secretaries of the Arts and Humanities.
4. A comprehensive plan for theatre development throughout the country with specific concern for:
  - a. Lifelong learning programs
  - b. College/University programs
5. The need for arts--especially drama--in education; aesthetic education.
6. The need for financial policies to nurture the arts, e.g., eliminate sales tax on tickets; make funding available for planning retreats like Wingspread
7. The need for capital funding.
8. Money (grants) available for amateur arts and artists--a reasonable share of the resources.
9. Financial underwriting of tours abroad for FACT (Festival of American Community Theatre) winners and delegates to Quadrennial World Congress of IATA (International Amateur Theatre Association).
10. Funding for technical assistance in matters of production and management made available to community theatres.

You are invited to study this list, expand on it, improve it, and come with your ideas to the special session of the AKT Conference. You'll be helping Kansans who love the arts make an impact on the White House Conference in 1980.

## DIVISION REPORTS AND INFORMATION

### Children's Theatre

The 1979 AKT Conference will feature the first Kansas Festival of Theatre for Young Audiences. Theatres and theatre organizations who involve themselves in theatre for children and young people are invited to bring a production to this festival. Following are guidelines for participation:

1. Each performing group is invited to be an organizational member of the Association of Kansas theatre, and individual participants are encouraged to register for the AKT Conference.
2. Performances presented as part of the festival are to be finished productions (no "works in progress", please) of material suitable for audiences of children and young people.
3. Each performing group will be responsible for the production and transportation costs of their own production.
4. Each group will supply all scenery, costumes, properties, make-up, sound tapes/records, special effect equipment, and other special technical requirements for their production.



5. Each group will be allowed one hour for set-up and strike. This limitation should be considered when technical elements of the production are designed. Keep it simple.
6. Each group will set-up, run, and strike their production under the direction of the festival stage manager, and with the assistance of the festival light/sound technician. If the production requires a running crew (other than one person to run lights and sound) it must be provided by the performing group.
7. Each group will be asked to provide at least one person from their company to help clean up the performance facility after the festival.
8. All festival participants are asked to comply with regulations about smoking, eating, and drinking in the performance facility.
9. Each performing group will supply the festival planning committee with the following information: Scenery floor plan (including all measurements), light and sound plots, descriptions of special effects and technical requirements, cast and crew size. This information will be used by the festival stage manager and technician to facilitate set-up, run, and strike.
10. Each group will supply the festival planning committee with the following publicity material and information: Title and author of production, brief synopsis, age range suitability, reviews and photographs of previous performances (if available), full name and brief history of the performing group's involvement with theatre for young audiences, copies of local publicity materials used by the group.

Festival administrators will provide the following services and information:

1. A facility with appropriate performing areas.
2. Information about the performance facilities, including: seating capacity and type of seating, ground plan and measurements of the performing areas, descriptions of lighting and sound equipment available, and the type of loading, storage, dressing room and make-up areas available.
3. A qualified production stage manager, a light/sound technician, and a crew of volunteers to host the festival and assist with house management and ticket sales.
4. Festival publicity and ticket sales.
5. A complete schedule of the festival and a description of festival operations.
6. Qualified persons to serve as respondents for each performance.
8. Certificates for each festival participant and recognition awards for each performing group.

Communicate questions or information regarding Childrens' Theatre Division to Charlotte D. Mason, 101 Michigan #101, Lawrence, KS 66044 (913) 841-6495.

## Community Theatre

SOMETHING'S IN THE WIND! Good news for all struggling Community Theatre people. Plans were discussed at the October AKT Board Meeting about the development of a guest artist/guest critic program with the College and University Division of AKT. We feel this is an area of real need with Community Theatre and are excited about the possibility of such a program being developed. More information is yet to come about the specifics, but be prepared. This is something which could benefit every community theatre in the state.

The Russell Arts Council Drama Committee presented a unique production recently. The play, a three-act courtroom-trial-drama-comedy entitled "The Night of January 16th" was presented in the courtroom of the Russell County Courthouse. The jury for the production was selected from the audience and the ending of the play was determined by the actual decision handed down by that jury. Getting cooperation from the Russell County Commissioners for use of the courtroom shows how community involvement can be generated by an active and imaginative community theatre group. Congratulations, Russell.

"The show must go on" was really put to the test recently in Wellington when they were presenting a Melodrama in conjunction with a local town celebration. When the lights went out all over town (and stayed out for the remainder of the evening, incidentally), frantic stage hands and enthusiastic theatre-goers dug out flashlights, lanterns, anything that would "shed a little light on the subject" and continued the performance. We understand it really made the production an "Old Time" Melodrama.

The McPherson Theatre Guild presented its first successful theatre production of the season, "Never Too Late" which was under the direction of Wayne McIntosh. Mr. McIntosh was brought to McPherson by the McPherson Arts Council through the CETA Program as a technical and design consultant. Besides designing the set for this production, the Guild hired him to direct the play, with money obtained through a matching funds grant from the Kansas Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts. Wayne also worked at the high school on their production of "The Music Man," and will also be available to the entire community, including the colleges, for technical and design assistance and consultation. If your community theatre is having difficulty in securing knowledgeable people for any area of the theatre, you might want to check into the CETA program. It worked in McPherson.

We hope all you Community Theatre people who are fortunate enough to have a college in or near your community will attend some of the excellent theatre being offered on the college campuses. We recently saw "Pippin" presented by Marymount College and it was one of the most exciting theatre experiences we have had for quite some time. We also saw "Jesus Christ Superstar" at the Topeka Civic Theatre and were very impressed by the professional quality of their production. Their set (a 14' X 27' macrame) was stunning, and the recorded soundtrack was something you'd have to hear to believe. Might check with Don Bachmann, Director of Topeka Civic, about the availability of that tape. The entire show was marvelous.

Please send any items of interest you would like to see in the MARQUEE to Merna Pritchard, 925 North Ash, McPherson, Ks 67460 (316) 241-4267.

## Professional Theatre

The word this month is Convention '79. The Annual AKT professional auditions will be Sunday, March 11, in Century II. Anyone interested in attending or wishing further information, please contact me. My address is below. We don't want to overlook any theatre wanting to participate; so if you haven't been contacted, please call or write.

Many of you are aware that my family suffered the loss of our daughter last month. Kathryn was a talented beautiful individual whom we miss so very much. Her demise has left me stunned and less than totally effective, at least temporarily. Yet I know we must continue, thus I implore to help me to "fire-up!" I've neglected my job as your chairperson this month and have not called on any of you for your schedules or your ideas for convention; and it is upon us very soon. Call me...write me...bombard me with your wishes. One thing is certain: we will have a workshop on Saturday involving the theatres who will participate in the Sunday auditions and aimed at the prospective auditioners. This time will give theatres each a chance to view and interview the other.

There will also be a display space available at a small fee. The plans are not complete yet, but if you wish to create something, let me know and I'll get information to you as soon as possible. Finally, send news:

Veda Rogers, Vassar, KS 66543 (913) 828-3249.

## Secondary School Theatre

A District Thespian Conference was hosted at Campus H.S. on Nov. 18. Workshops in puppetry, directing, acting, model building, chamber theatre, and other areas. S.E.C.T. provided two workshops on lighting. Special guests included Ron Frederickson and four Emporia State University Students, Dick Wellsbacher and Joyce Cavarozzi from Wichita State University. Campus High School produced a childrens' theatre production for the guests titled "The Beeples" by Alan Cullen. Schools attending were Wichita West, Northwest, East, Derby, Garden City, and Coleman Jr. High. Garden City High School will be hosting a district conference in January.

The State Thespian Conference will be held this year in conjunction with the Association of Kansas Theatre Conference. There are special events at the convention for high school Thespians and sponsors. For more information, write Bob Lambert, State Director of Thespians, at Garden City High School or Nadine Charlsen, Campus High School.

Auditions. High School seniors should become acquainted with the University/College audition and interview program at the AKT convention. The opportunity is here to audition for and talk to college theatre faculty members first hand.

Communicate information or questions to Nadine Charlsen, Campus High School, 2100 W. 55th St. So., Wichita, KS 67217 (316) 524-3281.

Are there times when your organization lacks the expertise to design those special settings for your production? Do you find yourselves wishing that you could bring in a guest actor to play the lead in your production? Undoubtedly many organizations grapple with questions and concerns of this nature. For that very reason AKT is interested in developing a "guest artist exchange" program in our state. Merna Pritchard, Chairperson of our Community Theatre Division, has indicated to me that smaller community theatre organizations, for example, would often like to have someone come in to direct a play, or to design a setting. Finding that kind of available expertise is very difficult, however. The financial burden of hiring a guest professional renders that avenue quite impossible for most organizations. We therefore feel that we need to look in our own back yards so to speak, for that expertise, and places that immediately come to mind are the graduate theatre departments at our six state universities. There is a tremendous pool of talent in those departments. Furthermore, many institutions might also have undergraduate students with considerable experience and expertise in various facets of theatre work. The problem then boils down to finding the means to bring together the organizations looking for assistance with those persons interested in providing their services. I have already sent out a letter to each of our state schools, asking for input from the graduate departments on this idea. In addition, I would like to receive feedback and input from other organizations--from other colleges and universities, as well as from community theatre organizations. This entire idea is only in its 'infancy' at this point. If AKT is to serve as a 'clearing-house' for such a program, we will need your help to put together a workable project. Please send me your ideas. Send any communication or question to:

Piet R. Knetsch, Dept. of English, Speech, and Drama, Bethany College,  
Lindsborg, KS 67456 (913) 227-3311 ext 133.

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### LIVE THEATRE CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE

The following was written for the Kansas City Star by Dr. Patricia McIlrath, founder and director of the Missouri Repertory Theatre.

Years ago, fascinated by our first, tiny television set and remembering my participation in pioneer television production in Chicago, my father said to me: "Are you sure that you have made the right decision in specializing in theatre rather than television? Television could revolutionize the world as we know it. The quality of its leadership will be crucial. Don't you want to be a part of that development?"

Without much hesitation, I replied, "No form of art can be more important than live, professional theatre. Just because TV is so exciting and will be such a powerful, competitive influence is reason enough for me to dedicate myself to live theatre. Because nothing on earth can really take its place. The presence of live actors and live audiences interacting in an actual moment in time, and stimulated by each other's active presence as well as by great ideas of the playwright, gives live theatre a dimensional power and value that almost



transcend words. I simply can't explain it, but live theatre must be my choice."

I still feel the same today. The sad fact is, however, that so many people have yet to experience it. What a gap in living! For in a very real sense, live theatre can actually change your life. In its fierce pursuit of truth, it will show you the power of combined head and heart in the total exhilarating experience of revelation. Your own deep, personal needs can somehow be directly addressed by live theatre. Both you and the artists, representing people in all walks of life, can mysteriously meet, making your private selves vulnerable.

There are such suprising, unexpected rewards. By making you totally forget yourself for two and a half hours, theatre can actually help to resolve your problems--fatigue, loneliness, depression, frustrations, aches and pains, heartbreak, guilt, the need for more varied companionship, the sense of futility and uselessness. The only experience I know comparable to the healing power of theatre is the pure act of religious worship by one possessing deepest faith. Both are to be cherished.

Audience responses tell it best. The beautiful, almost joyous face of a woman following a recent performance of "Shadow Box" will long remain with me. "Thank you all," she said, "for this important inspirational play. It was a godsend to me tonight. I have terminal cancer, too, and Brians words were meant just for me. It has helped so much."

Equally memorable is a letter from a dynamic, inspired parish priest after seeing "All My Sons." "If I could put in a sermon the power...of that theatre performance, I could convert the world."

Live theatre, in short not only says "yes" to life, it celebrates it. But don't take my word for it. Try it and see for yourselves if somehow the world doesn't become more interesting and beautiful, life a bit more precious, problems a mite less significant, and your own life suddenly more in perspective with the universe and its mysteries, leaving you the wondrously calming revelation of both your own significance and insignificance--the sense of being truly involved in mankind--past, present and future.

I call that important!

#### VENTRILOQUIST'S DUMMY

Let me tell you a thing or two.  
But first you must learn to bear  
with stiff ways and a splintery tongue.

It is a terrible thing to be inspired!

Believe me, I'd rather talk  
in my own voice even though it is  
most like  
the creak and groan of trees in the  
wind,  
no more and no less. . . .

He with a tongue of raw meat,  
teeth like tombstones, joints as free  
and supple as rawhide, catgut,  
what does he know?

I sing you a wooden verse.  
I clack and crack my jokes until  
you clap your soft palms red

and my two glass eyes cloud  
with a miracle of tears.

George Garrett

JOIN AKT!

Complete  
this  
form  
and mail  
with check  
to:

ASSOCIATION  
OF  
KANSAS  
THEATRE

201 Humanities  
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State  
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Emporia, KS  
66801

JOIN AKT!

ASSOCIATION OF KANSAS THEATRE  
Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

1979 Dues

Regular \$10 \_\_\_\_\_

Student \$ 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Organizational\* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Tax Deductible  
Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Receiving MARQUEE? yes no

Division Preference:

Children's Theatre \_\_\_\_\_

Community Theatre \_\_\_\_\_

Professional Theatre \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Theatre \_\_\_\_\_

Univ. & College Theatre \_\_\_\_\_

New Membership \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Check payable to: AKT

\*\$20—an. budget under \$5000

\$30—an. budget \$5000 to  
\$10,000

\$50—an. budget over \$10,000

**ASSOCIATION OF KANSAS THEATRE**  
**201 Humanities Building**  
**Emporia State University**  
**Emporia, Kansas 66801**

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